



**City of Saratoga Springs Charter Review Commission Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, August 9, 2001**

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- A. Human Resources Department to serve all City departments and employees.
- B. Conduct a comprehensive budget system.
- C. Require an annual audit.
- D. Inventory of City real and personal property.
- E. Capital and facility planning and implementation
- F. Adoption of uniform City policies and procedures.
- G. Improve intergovernmental relations.
- H. Restructured Planning and Economic Development.
- I. Develop uniform purchase policy and procedures.

Denise Polit said Commission members have renumbered and regrouped sections of the charter to make it more user friendly. She said proposed changes are to be budget neutral and if possible reduce the burden on taxpayers. She said there was an attempt to achieve savings to offset any possible additional expenditures and in many changes the savings will continue into the future B in other cases the savings are cost avoidance measures.

Denise Polit said Commission members also reviewed the County Supervisor positions and have now required them to work closer with the City Council and represent City issues and positions at the county level. She said the Commission has reviewed the bidding process and attempted to streamline that process by raising the threshold on bidding and require competitive bidding.

Denise Polit informed members of the public that this is a public hearing on a set of proposed amendments to the City's Charter which were prepared by the Commission. She said a full copy of the proposed amendments is on the City's WEB page and on display at the Saratoga Springs Public Library as well as in City Hall. She said written comments on the amendments should be submitted to the Kathy Moran, Engineering Department, City Hall, 474 Broadway before noon on Monday, August 20, 2001.

Denise Polit said it was important for the public to understand that there is still time and opportunity to affect what will be in the final charter which will be voted on in the upcoming general election. She said the Commission's deadline for submission of the final version is September 6, 2001.

Denise Polit said there will be a transition period for some of the specific proposed recommendations, however, the overall document becomes effective in 2004. She explained though that the Commission understood that there would be some items that would take longer to implement. She said the effective date for specific items would be written into the charter.

Denise Polit said members of the Charter Review Commission were available this evening to answer any questions that might arise. She then opened the public hearing.

Denise Polit said although attendance had been low at the public hearings, there was a very good turnout at the meeting sponsored by the Historical Society.

Lou Schneider said he had read both the existing and the proposed charters and he found the proposed charter much easier to read. He said it was his impression from reading this charter that it was leaning toward a strong mayor. He said he would have liked to have seen four year staggered terms. Lou Schneider commended Commission members on their work.

Denise Polit said there were a number of individuals who would have liked the Commission the change the form of government, however, there was no crisis which would predicate change. She said the perception that there was a problem which would then require a change to the form of government did not exist.

Pat Brereton asked if there was a majority vote of the Commission to retain this form of government. Denise Polit said yes. She pointed out though that did not mean that Commission members were convinced that this was the best form, but rather it was the best form for the time being. She said Commission members also weighed their possibility of success. She informed members of the audience that the decision to retain this form was not made until three or four months into the process.

Denise Polit said the next step in this process is to educate the residents of the community. She reminded everyone that this charter does not take effect until January 2004. She also pointed out that there will be a transition period.

Elio Del-Sette asked if this would be the only referendum on the ballot. Tony Izzo said according to state law, if there is a charter referendum on the ballot, no other referendums are allowed.

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## **ADJOURNMENT**

Elio Del-Sette moved and Vassar Curtis seconded to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 p.m. There being no one else wishing to speak, Denise Polit adjourned the meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kathy Moran  
Clerk

Approved: